Introduction: A Crisis of Stateness and a Challenge to Political Participation

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1
Introduction
A Crisis of Stateness and a Challenge to Political Participation

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Abstract

Since 2009 Greece has undergone a process of change, involving a far-reaching metamorphosis in some areas, an acute crisis and tremendous depletion of resources in others, and many instances of successful resistance by die-hard supporters of the old ways. This collection of essays on Greeks politics and policy aims to focus more on the development of processes and institutions. It addresses (mostly directly, on occasion also indirectly) issues of policy change and – more generally – of stateness in crisis. In 'stateness' political scientists and international relations experts recognize a concept that has actually travelled a lot since it was first introduced in its modern incarnation in the 1960s by Nettl in a rightly famous article on "stateness as a conceptual variable" (Nettl, 1968), and was taken over more recently by scholars like Fukuyama. Stateness is again, as it used to be in the past, a fascinating concept with which to approach the problems in today's Europe; it is a concept that involves a combination of a number of different dimensions of actual state practice and state behavior. It involves the proactive, the coercive, as well as infrastructural aspects of states' existence and behavior and the main question therefore is: what has the European integration project done to stateness—what is the impact of EU integration on stateness? Not just on particular states, say on France or Germany or Italy or Greece but on stateness as such in today's Union (see Lavdas 2015 and the references therein).

Keywords: stateness, crisis, illiberal democracy, political participation

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Stateness in Hard Times

To tackle stateness in this context one needs to at least distinguish between states' capacities, states' autonomy and the legitimacy of states. Scholars have summarized this debate focusing in particular on two crucial dimensions of stateness: capacities and autonomy. What happens to these dimensions of stateness, as European unification evolves in its asymmetric and often erratic ways? This is a question we will need to ask again and again. By capacities, we imply the relation between the scope and extent of state activity and the strength and effectiveness of state activity. By autonomy we allude to a degree of collusion with interest groups and organized interests and the different modes of access that interests possess in the different political systems and also the extent to which the formation of goals of state activity is through processes of relative autonomy. Finally, there are issues of political legitimacy. Legitimacy, one can look at from at least three different perspectives. One is the role of opposition, the role of political and social opposition which is crucial. The second is support for the political system in the very traditional systems-analysis perspective. And, finally, the notion of political justification.

There have been transformations of stateness in the EU, but these have been asymmetric. And because they are asymmetric they tend to assume different forms and they become significant in different ways for the Union. It is impossible to talk meaningfully about the EU today without being reminded that a crucial aspect of the issues have been the result of the crisis in the EU, not just the Eurozone, and in fact the parameters of the management of the crisis became first evident in the management of the crisis in the European Union before it became a crisis of the Eurozone. Bracketing at this stage the critical question, whether the Euro may prove to be a destructive force for the EU in the absence of a full union as a federation (Stiglitz, 2016), we need to discuss the implications of the introduction to the EU more generally of the IMF as an external enforcer. The case of Latvia, Hungary, and Romania are very important in this context, and they are very important because it is with these cases outside the Eurozone but obviously in the European Union, that most of the major parameters in the approach to crisis management and the attempted implementation of a new order in the European Union were decided. From different perspectives (see Lütz & Kranke 2010; Lavdas, Litsas and Skiadas, 2013), scholars have argued that what happened with Latvia, Hungary, and to some extent Romania, is that the IMF was brought in for two different reasons.

One reason was that countries like Sweden—the banks of which were very worried about exposure in Latvia — were insistent that an external enforcer should be brought in, and that an experienced external enforcer, in this case the IMF, should be considered part of a solution for providing structural assistance and rescue packages to countries like Latvia, Hungary and Romania. So one reason why the IMF was brought in was because the EU was in need of an external enforcer. Why is that? Basically because as we know, the EU even after Maastricht was keen to work basically with both carrots and sticks but the results of sticks – the whole enforcement and compliance culture – were weak and notoriously difficult to improve for a number of very good reasons – consider, for example, the work of scholars such as Maria Mendrinou, to use a Greek name (Mendrinou 1996; 2010). In other words, games of enforcement and compliance have not just been difficult but also very tricky for the EU, and therefore Stockholm and Berlin and other capitals insisted that an external enforcer with a long experience in compliance and regimes of compliance should be brought in and help with areas of expertise and other ways to make sure that agreements could be implemented.

The second reason originated in the IMF itself rather than the need of people in Sweden or Germany or other places to have an external enforcer on agreed rescue packages. And that was the search within the IMF for a revised role and -interestingly- this search for the new role came at a time when the IMF had become much more flexible in terms of its stance with regard to economic conditionality. To

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put it differently, when the IMF was asked to help Hungary and Latvia, the IMF had become much more flexible than the EU's own conditionality with regard to the ways in which they should manage the rescue of Latvia and Hungary. Dealing with demands for debt haircut is an entirely different story, a story that has not yet been completed.

In this context of politics in hard times, there is also the question of 'illiberal democracy' (Zakaria 1997) and its emergence in some of the EU member states (Müller 2015; 2016). We touch on this issue in 7. From Authoritarianism to Europeanization? but only marginally. As stated from the outset, our aim in this collection has been to look at background factors combined with an appreciation of current political and electoral affairs in Greece. The broader issue, of course, concerns the extent to which the EU ought to play an active role in protecting liberal democracy in member states (Müller 2015). Issues such as these – pointing to the increased fusion of national and EU politics – help shape the agenda at both levels, national and European.

The Special Issue

The contributors to this Special Issue explore three major areas of concern to students of contemporary Greek politics. First, electoral competition, its main features and its implications. Second, aiming to understand interactions between social and political developments, we discuss the links between political parties, party platforms, and public policy, including social policies in an era of crisis and policy change. Third, we take a comparative view of Greece's Europeanization process, its scope, conditions, and limitations. Other areas could have been included; it is always possible to return to these and other issues in a revised version when Greek and EU developments will have made us wiser.

It is commonplace to suggest that the current crisis has affected existed institutions but also political participation and electoral dynamics. Populism has been a particularly visible factor in the transformation of the political landscape and electoral dynamics and its impact resulted in critical failures at the level of policy and to an explosion of further socio-economic problems and public disillusionment. Yet populism as such fails to offer critical insights in a comparative perspective. As Afonso, Zartaloudis & Papadopoulos (2014) have suggested in an excellent paper, the role of clientelist linkages and the networks mediating party-state-interests relations can help explain some of the differences in adaptation potential and policy change between countries such as Greece and Portugal. The study of the changing contours of Greek politics contributes to an understanding of the factors hindering the implementation of effective policies and their social, political and economic impact while exploring possible solutions that can bring about positive effects on both the political and socio-economic level.

In this context, Theodore Chadjipadelis in *2 - "What really happened: Parliamentary Elections in Greece, 2015",* analyses the axes of political competition in the last two national elections in 2015, through the utilization of correspondence analysis method, using the constituencies as cases and the parties as variables. The aim of this approach is to realize the geographical pattern of the vote and the axes of political competition while, by using the data from the election surveys, to uncover the social and demographical attitudes connected with the reported vote for each party. The methodology of the paper involves, first, a multivariate analysis in order to compute principal axes and loadings and, second, cluster analysis in order to study the attitudes which are grouped in different clusters. The paper offers an innovative approach to electoral change in Greece during the critical year 2015.

In *3 - "Mediterranean Left-Wing Populism: The Case of SYRIZA*", Emmanouil Mavrozacharakis, Dimitrios Kotroyannos, and Stylianos I. Tzagkarakis analyze the case of SYRIZA in Greece as a particular

EQPAM Volume 6 No.2 April 2017
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case of growing left-wing populism in the Mediterranean context. The analysis focuses on common paths and roots between SYRIZA and PODEMOS in Spain, the coalition between social-democrats and radical left in Portugal and the Five Star Movement in Italy - which includes several aspects of a left-wing populism – which lead to significant increases in their electoral percentages. Revealing some of their main characteristics, such as partisan organization professionalism, charismatic leadership and their anti-European rhetoric, the analysis allow the deeper investigation of paths that left-wing populism in these countries utilize in order to gain political power. SYRIZA has been selected as a case study manifesting a prominent example of populist agenda utilization in its way towards the electoral victory and the impressive post-electoral political reversal. The authors argue that SYRIZA's rise to power was based on versatility and on a high degree of classless ideological ambiguity which eventually led to the implementation of harsher austerity measures.

In *4 - "Utopian Left-Wing Expectations and the Social Consequences of the 3rd Memorandum in Greece",* Dimitrios Kotroyannos, Stylianos I. Tzagkarakis, Emmanouil Mavrozacharakis and Apostolos Kamekis discuss the pre-electoral – utopian – left-wing expectations in Greece and their crucial role on the socially destructing consequences that the post-electoral implementation of the third memorandum has created. The authors focus on the specific populist characteristics of the pre-electoral agenda of SYRIZA which relieved its commitment for the termination of austerity measures and the implementation of tax alleviation or – after the agreement for the implementation of the 3rd memorandum and before the September 2015 elections – a socially endued implementation of the memorandum. In the second part of the chapter, the authors analyze crucial aspects of the governmental policy of SYRIZA, with specific emphasis on the negative social consequences that tax increases have created, which prominently deepen the depression. Thus, the general aim of this chapter is to analyze the policies of the first left government in Greece by focusing on the tentative social consequences of the third memorandum and at the same time, by studying some of the basic factors which led to its electoral victory, such as populism.

In *5 - "Greek Islands in Crisis: Social vulnerability and the need for integrated territorial development strategies",* Nikos Papadakis and Stella Kyvelou offer a systematic and innovative study of increasing social vulnerability in the Greek Islands and emphasize the need for the introduction of integrated territorial developmental strategies. The analysis focuses on the relationship between insularity and social vulnerability while specifically emphasizes on issues such as general and youth unemployment, inactivity, the NEETs phenomenon (Young people aged 15-24 Not in Education Employment or Training), poverty and social exclusion in a territorial dimension. Furthermore, the chapter draws some local findings concerning the Greek insular and micro-insular space while a main objective of the research is to explore to what extent blue growth potential can create inclusive prosperity in coastal and insular areas and how this phenomenon can be measured and monitored.

In *6 - "Social Rights and Sustainable Development: A Two-Way Street?",* Stylianos I. Tzagkarakis, Dimitris Kotroyannos, Apostolos Kamekis, and Evangelos Taliouris explore the connections, interactions, relations and links between the concepts of social rights and sustainable development. The authors emphasize the three interconnected pillars of sustainable development (socio-cultural, economic, environmental) with special focus on the social part, in order to stress the importance of social rights not only for achieving the objectives of the socio-cultural pillar but also for promoting sustainable development in general. Specifically, the authors focus on employment, education and health care as the main social-right pillars and argue that they can enhance social capital under certain conditions. Furthermore, they argue that sustainable development and social responsibility are mutually reinforcing as long as both can foster social sustainability by increasing the determinants for social cohesion. The main purposes of this chapter are: a) to discuss the role of social rights in the promotion of sustainable development and b) to

ISSN 2285 – 4916
ISSN-L 2285 - 4916

examine the policy paths and governance modes that enhance both social sustainability and sustainable development, as a directive in order to address the extended socio-economic problems that crisis has created in Greece.

Finally, in 7 - *"From Authoritarianism to Europeanization? Paths to a Contestable European Future in Greece and Poland",* Kostas A. Lavdas, Dimitrios Kotroyannos, and Stylianos I. Tzagkarakis consider the cases of Greece and Poland in a comparative study of the different paths from authoritarianism to contested Europeanization. To explore Europeanization paths, outcomes and prospects, the authors emphasize on the interactions between regime transformation, interest politics and accession processes. The interactions involve (a) influences of politics, institutional traditions and interests on the formation of the applicant states' European strategy and (b) interactions between processes of integration and organized interests and domestic political contestation. Interactions work in the context of more general Europeanization processes, which concern adaptation, adjustment, impact and feedback, beginning in anticipation of membership and expanding to more synchronized if still asymmetrical developments during later stages of full membership. Different paths from authoritarianism to democracy have combined with different Europeanization processes to result in partial divergence in Europeanization outcomes.

Trends towards what?

The contributions aim to cover a wide range of dimensions that help understand Greek politics in hard times. Is this a story of success or failure? Early pessimism on Greece's Europeanization in view of a porous and interests-colonized state apparatus coupled with very substantial military expenditures linked to the wrong rationale (Greek-Turkish rivalry) seems to be corroborated (Lavdas 1997). Obviously, the yardstick one uses also matters a lot. A stable NATO commitment combined with continuing EU membership may facilitate the 'return to normality' (Litsas and Tziampiris, 2017). The same applies to the time span: it may be necessary to reserve judgment until the period after the major electoral challenges in the EU (France and Germany, later in 2017) and in Greece itself. There are also some positive signs. The period between 2010-2016 witnessed a modest and asymmetric increase in state capacities in Greece. If by state capacities we mean the scope, the reach, and the strength of state institutions. Why? Because there have been systematic – not always successful and definitely not symmetric – attempts to increase the presence of the state for example in trying to increase competition in highly oligopolistic markets, in some cases clearly without success, but the attempt has been made more systematically since 2010 than probably at any time since the regime change in 1974. The same applies to modest but real attempts to increase the revenue-extracting capacities of the state. There have been systematic attempts but these attempts have been, as mentioned, asymmetric and have often been frustrated.

Hence when it comes to capacities a tentative conclusion – which is perhaps counter-intuitive – is that through the crisis the capacities have increased, while on the other hand the autonomy from social interests has not increased. Relations and the fusion of interests have gone through shifts but the overall autonomy of states and institutions has not increased while legitimacy has obviously suffered significant losses, especially democratic legitimacy and these losses have been, again, non-symmetric but they are significant, dramatic, and even dangerous.

This points to a certain irony. National and EU-level politics is now so closely interlinked that it is virtually impossible to analyze 'domestic' and 'European' politics in separation. Yet the very interregnum at which the EU system finds itself – less than a federation, much more than an international organization – provides both historic opportunities and severe constraints for economically weaker member states. Greece

EQPAM Volume 6 No.2 April 2017
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ISSN-L 2285 - 4916

is such a state – with the added characteristic of extensive defense commitments and substantial military expenditure. Greece's substantial military budget can be seen from a number of perspectives and can be made to appear also from a diplomatic perspective much more meaningful – for example, in the context of NATO burden- sharing.1 But it definitely needs to be taken into account properly as a factor in the debates on today's stateness in EU development and it is often absent. This is a bizarre omission: it is erratic to compare and contrast say, Portugal with its practically minimal military commitments and expenditure with Greece with substantial military commitments and expenditure and pretend that there is no difference when it comes to policy change and EU policy adaptation.

Greece's future will depend to a significant extent on the direction the EU will follow in the next few years. Of course, domestic politics can still encourage or derail a positive direction. In fact, Greece's incipient and fragile recovery (in the third quarter of 2014, Greece's growth was higher than that of any other Eurozone member) was halted by politics, i.e., by the country's early (and totally unnecessary) elections. But we also need to focus on stability and predictability and these are a function of developments at both levels – national and EU.

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[1] For current data and useful comparisons on military expenditures and actual military buildup see http://www.globalfirepower.com/

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